Andrea N. Switzer

C&I 445: Information Literacy Instruction for School Librarians

Chris Bohne

February 16, 2011

Information Problem-Solving Lesson

Common Beliefs About Bats: Are They True or False?

Introduction:

While taking my elementary education classes at UIS, I created a cross-curricular unit plan for 3rd grade focusing on bats. I’ve always found bats to be very interesting animals and believe it is very unfortunate that they are largely treated with fear and hatred, especially since many of the reasons for such feelings are unfounded or exaggerated. When choosing a theme for my unit, I wanted to focus on a topic that would not only be interesting, but also help to change students’ way of thinking and looking at the world. Having a chance to study bats in-depth would allow students the chance to learn new things about bat species and to see past the negative reputation bat have garnered through superstition and misconceptions. Not only would this be beneficial for the bats, but it would also allow the students to foster a more open-minded view of the world, as well as the knowledge that not everything should be taken at face-value.

One of the lessons included in this unit was a brief writing assignment about what the students could do as individuals to help bats. Since over 50% of America’s bat populations are either endangered or in severe decline, one of the sub-topics I wished to focus on in this unit was conservation, so the idea of this assignment was to get the students to generate ideas about how to protect bats. Before the actual generation of ideas and the writing part of the lesson took place, the teacher was to present a brief presentation about bat myths and the truth behind them (ex: Bats are not actually blind; Very few bats drink blood; etc.) There was little student involvement in this portion of the lesson. Looking back at it, I decided that the subject of bat myth vs. fact needed more emphasis placed on it and more student involvement in order to make the information stick in their memories.

Information Problem:

Students will search provided resources for information that will either prove or disprove an assigned claim about bats.

Objectives:

Students will utilize reading comprehension skills to determine the validity of a given piece of information with 95% accuracy.

Students will develop research skills by utilizing books and the Internet to locate information and report findings with 95% accuracy.

Standards:

5.A.1a Identify questions and gather information.

5.A.1b Locate information using a variety of resources.

5.C.2b Prepare and deliver oral presentations based on inquiry or research.

Lesson:

* Plan
* After splitting into groups of 2 and receiving the handouts listed below, each group will choose a claim they wish to research.
* Partners will then briefly discuss what sort of research strategy to use, deciding which resources to check first and how to locate the desired information in each source (what keywords to use, what topics to look for in the index, etc.)
* Do
* Each group will then use the classroom computers/computer lab and the provided reference books to locate information about their claim. Students need to find information from at least 2 different sources, preferably at least one online and one book source.
* Each group will use their report worksheets to take notes from the sources they locate. Notes should be **paraphrased**, **not copied**.
* The groups will analyze the information they have found to determine whether or not their assigned claim is true or false.
* Review
* Groups will take turns sharing their information with the rest of the class and describe their search process.
* The claims will then be separated into two lists to be displayed in the classroom: a Bat Facts list, and a Bat Myths list.
* Students will then be asked how they feel about bats now that they have learned more about what bats are really like. Has their opinion changed? How could they use what they have learned to help in the bat conservation effort?

Evaluation:

Each partner group will be expected to completely fill out their Claim Report worksheet, including what their assigned claim is, whether they determined if their claim was true or false, the title and author or URL address of the (at least) two resources they pulled information from, and a paraphrasing of the information each source provided that supports the validity or invalidity of their claim. Each group will also be expected to briefly present their information and conclusion to the rest of the class along with a brief explanation of the strategy they used to locate their information.

Handouts:

Claim Report worksheet; Instructions and Online Source Guide; List of True/False Claims

Name(s)\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Claim Report**

Claim:

Claim is (circle one): True False

Source #1

Title & Author/URL:

What source says:

Source #2

Title & Author/URL:

What source says:

**Bat Claim Research Project**

Instructions:

1. After you and your partner have chosen a claim to investigate and confirmed it with the teacher, decide on a research plan. Which sources will you search first? What key words or phrases should you look for? Will one of you search the online sites while the other reads the resource books, or will you search together? Etc.
2. Use the provided resource books and the approved links listed below to find your information. Remember, you are looking for information that will either prove your claim is *true* (fact) or *false* (myth). You must have information that backs up your decision.
3. You must find information from *at least 2 sources*! Try to use at least 1 online source and 1 book source. Additional sources and information may be written on the back of your worksheet. You may also use notebook paper if needed.
4. When writing down the information you find DO NOT copy word-for-word what is written. You need to *paraphrase* what you find; write the information in your own words!
5. Make sure your worksheet is completely filled-out.
6. You will be presenting your findings to the entire class. Both group members need to participate in presenting, so decide ahead of time who will present which pieces of information. Also be prepared to describe your research strategy.

Online Sources: DO NOT use any other online sources or search engines unless approved by the teacher!

KidZone Bats: <http://www.kidzone.ws/animals/bats/index.htm>

Bats4Kids: <http://www.bats4kids.org/>

Bat Conservation International: <http://www.batcon.org/>

Bats! Why Should You Care?: <http://www.cccoe.k12.ca.us/bats/>

Ask Kids: <http://www.askkids.com/>

Kid Rex: <http://www.kidrex.org/>

Bat Claims List

1. Bats are very dirty animals.
2. Bats attack people to drink their blood.
3. There are nearly 1,000 different species of bats in the world.
4. All bats carry rabies, a terrible disease that affects the brain.
5. Bats are the only flying mammal in the world.
6. Bats are nature’s “bug control.” They help to keep the population of insects and other bugs at a safe level.
7. Bats are blind.
8. Over 50% of America’s bat species are either endangered or in serious decline.
9. Bats are a type of rodent, like mice.
10. Bats will often fly too close to humans and get caught in long hair.
11. Humans are bats’ biggest known enemy.
12. Some bats are known as “flying foxes.”

Bat Claims List (Teacher’s Copy)

1. Bats are very dirty animals. FALSE
2. Bats attack people to drink their blood. FALSE
3. There are nearly 1,000 different species of bats in the world. TRUE
4. All bats carry rabies, a terrible disease that affects the brain. FALSE
5. Bats are the only flying mammal in the world. TRUE
6. Bats are nature’s “bug control.” They help to keep the population of insects and other bugs at a safe level. TRUE
7. Bats are blind. FALSE
8. Over 50% of America’s bat species are either endangered or in serious decline. TRUE
9. Bats are a type of rodent, like mice. FALSE
10. Bats will often fly too close to humans and get caught in long hair. FALSE
11. Humans are bats’ biggest known enemy. TRUE
12. Some bats are known as “flying foxes.” TRUE